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A

SERMON,

DELIVERED

AT TRINITY CHURCH, MARCH 25, 1810.

ON THE DECEASE OF

DOCTOR JAMES LLOYD.

BY

J. S. J. GARDINER,

RECTOR.



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ISAIAH LXIV. 6.

WE ALL DO FADE AS A LEAF.

OF the various resources of the unfortunate, there is not one, that affords more solid satisfaction to a good man, than the consideration of the extreme shortness of human life. He suffers with humility, with patience, and even with joy, when he knows that there will be a termination of his sufferings, when he is sensible that that termination is not far distant, and that it will be succeeded by a state of eternal felicity and repose. But though the sincere christian considers death in this point of view, it is by no means regarded in the same light, or viewed with the same intrepidity by mankind in general. It is commonly esteemed as the greatest of evils ; and

we had rather bear life, with all its miseries, than go to that undiscovered country, from whose bourne no traveller has ever yet returned to bring us information. But as death is inevitable, and we must all go whither our fathers have gone before us, it is extreme folly not to reconcile ourselves to the common lot, and to be dissatisfied in suffering what we cannot avoid. Death can never be formidable to the good ; and if we are not of that description, it will be wise in us to amend our ways as soon as possible, and not leave the vast concerns of futurity to the mercies of a moment. For ‘ we all do fade as a leaf.’ The age of man is but a span in dimension, a moment in duration. Every hour, from our birth, brings us so much nearer to our death, and our first entrance into life is one step towards the grave.*

The small space of time, which God has assigned to man, is one of those truths, which it would be superfluous to prove, as it is the object of daily experience. Every thing in this world is subject to death. This is a lesson which we learn from all around us. Nature, in her most common appearances, is forever reminding us of the transitory nature of our existence, is always admonishing us of the lapse

* Masillon.

of time, and the decay of life. Observe the quick succession of day to night. The day dawns ; it brightens with the beams of the sun ; it shines in meridian splendour ; it fades into the evening twilight, and expires in darkness. Behold the vegetable kingdom, the flowers, the herbs, and the trees. The tree is planted ; it bears leaves ; it grows to maturity ; it yields its fruit in due season ; it withers ; it dies. Consider the various seasons as they roll ; how rapidly do they complete their short periods ! The genial spring is soon succeeded by the sultry summer ; the sultry summer is followed by the milder autumn, which is but the prelude of the dreary winter, that closes the melancholy scene. Thus does it fare with man. Human life has its different periods, its various seasons, which soon finish their appointed course. The spring of infancy is of short duration. The hot summer of youth soon mellows into the autumn of riper years, and the cold and deadly blasts of winter put a final period to the seasons of man.

Behold ! fond man ! see here thy pictur'd life !

Thy flowering spring, thy summer's ardent strength ;

Thy sober autumn, fading into age,

And pale, concluding winter comes at last,

And shuts the scene. Ah ! whither now are fled

Those dreams of greatness ! those unsolid hopes



Of happiness ; those longings after fame ;
 Those restless cares ; those busy, bustling days ;
 Those gay-spent festive nights ; those veering thoughts ;
 Lost between good and ill, that shar'd thy life ?
 All now are vanished !*

So sings the philosophical and christian poet.
 For thus our days and years glide on in quick and
 constant succession. We are borne along the silent
 but rapid stream of time, and are soon hurried into
 the boundless ocean of eternity, whence we shall re-
 turn no more.

The holy scriptures, by various images, and with
 extreme fertility of allusion, describe the perishable
 nature of human life, and the great uncertainty of its
 duration. They compare the days of our life to the
 grass that withereth, to the flower that fadeth, to the
 wind that passeth away, and cometh not again ; to a
 tale that is told and forgotten ; to a vapour, that ap-
 peareth for a little time, and vanisheth away. They
 remind us, that our days are swifter than a post ; that
 they pass away as the swift ships, and as the eagle
 that hastens to his prey ; that man cometh forth like
 a flower, and is cut down ; that he fleeth also as a
 shadow, and continueth not.

* Thomson.

We must not imagine, my brethren, that these images are the mere effusions of a fertile imagination, or a bare display of that fancy, which pervades the writings of the oriental nations. There is not one of these images, that is not founded in reality, and admirably descriptive of our mortal course. For what is the life of man? what is it but a rapid march, from life to death, from the cradle to the grave? Scarce do we enter on the theatre of this world, scarce do we begin to act the respective parts assigned us, before the curtain drops, and we are compelled to submit to that law, which has ordained unto all men once to die. Every year, every day, furnishes us with examples of this truth, and no man knows, how soon he may be called on to submit to the common fate.

‘We all do fade as a leaf.’ The analogy between leaves and the generations of men is striking. In the spring, when the blasts of winter are heard no more, and all nature becomes animated, the trees are clothed with leaves, that are at once their ornament and protection. These leaves refresh the eye with their lively verdure, expand their beauties to the sun, and flutter to the passing gale. Some are soon

blown from the parent tree, others enjoy a longer existence, but all wither and decay, when the storms of winter invade the forest, and blast the verdure of hill and dale. In the ensuing spring, a new race of leaves is seen, and the tree, lately naked, once more luxuriates in an ample foliage. Thus the human species fall, at different periods, from the tree of life. Some are blown off in the spring of their existence, some continue till the summer, few survive the blasts of autumn, and those few are shrunk and withered by the cold and deadly breath of winter. But another series supplies the place of those that perish, which also fade and die in their turn, and make room for a new succession. So true is it, that we all do fade as a leaf.

It has been remarked by critics, that there is great resemblance between the style and thoughts of Homer and those of the old testament. We discover in both a sublimity of thought, and majestic simplicity of expression, which are to be found in no other writings, and they both have just claims to the highest antiquity. In the sixth book of the Iliad, we find a similar comparison to that of the text, where the generations of men are resembled to leaves.

The passage is thus translated by the best of our poets.

Like leaves on trees, the race of man is found,
 Now green in youth, now withering on the ground ;
 Another race the following spring supplies,
 They fall successive, and successive rise.
 So generations in their course decay,
 So flourish these, when those are past away.

‘ We all do fade as a leaf.’ If such then, my brethren, be the unavoidable lot of man ; if, like a leaf, we must all, sooner or later, fade, what reflections ought we to entertain on the subject ? Were there no future state after this, were death an everlasting sleep, it would be wise, perhaps, to enjoy the present moment, and seize the few fleeting pleasures within our reach. The philosopher would be reconciled to what was unavoidable, and the miserable would regard death as a refuge from the woes of life, an asylum for pain and misfortune. Hear the sentiments of philosophy on this subject, as exprest by an eminent physician and poet.

To die, is landing on some silent shore,
 Where billows never break, nor tempests roar ;
 Ere well we feel the friendly stroke, ’tis o’er.
 The wise, through thought, th’ insults of death defy ;
 The fools through blest insensibility.

'Tis what the cowards fear, the unhappy crave ;
 Scorn'd by the wretch, and courted by the brave ;
 It eases lovers, sets the captive free,
 And though a tyrant, offers liberty.*

Such are the sentiments of philosophy ; and were this life the only life we shall experience, we should have no reason to object to them. But if there be, as we are taught there is, another state, death surely cannot be a matter of indifference ; we must feel that dread of an hereafter, which should induce us to lead a life of righteousness, and thus avoid the danger of future misery. If we all do fade as a leaf, shall we not also like a leaf revegetate in some future spring ? ' Can we believe, that we were introduced into this theatre of nature, only to go out again ? or that at most we are just to appear, and act a short part upon this stage, and show of what farther improvements we are capable, and then, however well our character has been supported, to be dismissed and seen no more ? Can this be the end of our being ? this all the business of our life ? and is the curtain then to drop, and the scene to close forever ? Can we think that we were thus formed, like some insects, to be the creatures only, as it were, of a day, to flutter

* Garth's Dispensary.

about awhile, in the short sunshine of life, and then to be extinct forever ?' No, my brethren, this could never have been the design of God in creating us ; else ' why these pleasing hopes, these fond desires, these longings after immortality ?' Such sensations could never be implanted in us for no purpose, but were doubtless designed as internal revelations of a future state, and as admonitions to us to consider the dignity and immortality of our nature.

Though we all do fade as a leaf, we shall, like the leaves, reflower at some more genial season. The cold and wintry frost of death will not last forever ; but the sun of righteousness will dissolve it with his beams. The spring of immortal life will succeed the winter of the tomb, and we shall no longer fade as a leaf, but flourish forever with undecaying verdure in heaven. Hear what the great apostle informs us on this subject, in strains far surpassing the boasted eloquence of Greece and Rome. ' Behold I shew you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump ; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immor-

tality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.'

But though life and immortality are brought to light through the gospel, it lies with you, my brethren, to determine whether that life, that immortality, shall be happy. Men die as they live, and their future destiny depends on the manner in which they passed through this scene of probation and trial. Consider then, my brethren, consider the extreme shortness and uncertainty of human life. We all do fade as a leaf. You will be called to a strict and severe account for your conduct in this world, and will be rewarded or punished according to your deeds. You know not how soon. This night your souls may be required. For are we not here now, and are we not gone in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye? Like leaves, we are forever falling from the tree of life. The hand of death shakes it, and we mingle with our kindred dust.

Even those, whose professional skill, under providence, has prolonged the life of others, cannot save their own. The physician must follow his patient, and equally submit to that law, which ordains unto all men once to die.

It is an event of this nature, that has given rise to the preceding discourse, in the sequel of which I shall endeavour to sketch the lineaments of a character, justly entitled to the highest tribute of our respect and veneration.

The poet well observes,

A good physician is the boon of heaven.

It may be questionable, whether in any other pursuit, or profession, so much is sacrificed to the service of mankind. However immersed in their employments, or numerous their avocations, others have their periods of leisure, and enjoy at least the repose of night unbroken. The physician alone is never for a moment the master of his time. Every pleasing engagement, every social pleasure, every domestick comfort, must be sacrificed to the imperious call of duty. The luxuries of the festive board must be left untasted, at the summons of misery, even where no remuneration can be expected. The heats of summer, and the tempestuous nights of winter, must

be encountered, and the whole life of the physician is one continued series of self-denial, for the benefit of his fellow-creatures. That a profession, attended with such numberless hardships and inconveniences, should be embraced by so many excellent and ingenious men, I think, may fairly be ranked amongst the choicest blessings, with which the goodness of providence alleviates the miseries of our unhappy species.* 'I believe, every man,' says Johnson, 'has found in physicians great liberality and dignity of sentiment, very prompt effusion of beneficence, and willingness to exert a lucrative art, where there is no hope of lucre.' The encomium is not less just than elegant ; for wherever the cries of distress are heard, the physician readily attends. He comes the officiating minister of mercy, and exerts the powers of his benevolent art. He gives strength to the weak, hope to the despondent, for a moment reanimates the dying ; and where he cannot cure the disease, breaks its violence, and mitigates its anguish. Like the blessed author of our religion, he goes about doing good. Like pious Job, he is, in some measure, eyes to the blind and feet to the lame.

* Life of Garth.

Among these distinguished benefactors of mankind, there are few more entitled to our respect and gratitude than Dr. JAMES LLOYD, whether we consider his professional skill, or his gentlemanly manners, his unblemished integrity, or his active benevolence.

Dr. Lloyd was the youngest of ten children, born to Henry Lloyd, a Boston merchant of an honourable character, and descended from a respectable family.* At the age of seventeen he came to Boston, and commenced his medical studies under the care and direction of Dr. William Clark of this town, who ranked among the most eminent of his profession. In the twenty-second year of his age he embarked for England, with the view of increasing his professional attainments, and spent two years in Guy's hospital as first dresser to Dr. Warner. In this school of surgical knowledge he enjoyed frequent opportunities of seeing the most critical operations performed by the first surgeons of the age, and among others, by the celebrated Sharp ; and attended, at his leisure hours,

* His father retired to his manor at Long Island, in the state of New-York, previous to his birth, and there the subject of our present consideration was born. He received his education at Stamford and New-Haven, in Connecticut, but did not enjoy the advantages, which may be derived from the learning and discipline of an university.

two courses of anatomical and surgical lectures, delivered by the accomplished Dr. William Hunter, royal professor of anatomy. In the mean time, he improved his knowledge of midwifery, by listening to two courses of lectures from Dr. William Smellie, the first gentleman, who taught the practice of that art on scientific principles. During his residence in England, he cultivated an acquaintance with many gentlemen of distinguished character, among whom was the learned Dr. Nichols, physician to king George the second.

Thus improved in his profession, on his return to Boston he commenced the practice of physick, surgery and midwifery, in the two last of which he was eminently successful, and early acquired, in those branches of the medical art, that celebrity, which he retained to the latest period of his life. He introduced a new method of amputation, by the double incision, first proposed and practised by the celebrated Cheselden, which facilitated the cure, by preventing the exfoliation of the bone, an inconvenience that always ensued from the old method of operation.

His practice, as physician, surgeon and accoucheur, was very extensive, as might naturally have been expected, from the superiority of his knowledge, and

from the success that attended it ; and he had the honour of introducing into this town the art of midwifery on true principles, in which his humanity, adroitness, and success, are said to have been unrivalled.

He was an excellent physician. Blest with a retentive memory, he could, on all occasions, find unfailing resources in his own experience, and in his numerous consultations and correspondences with the most eminent of his contemporaries. This rendered him, in consultations, one of the most useful and intelligent physicians in the state.

He was an accomplished gentleman. With a dignity of manners that commanded respect, he united an engaging urbanity, which improved the esteem, inspired by the general respectability of his character, into affection, among his more intimate acquaintance. His advanced years brought with them neither the infirmities, nor the peevish humours, which sometimes attend grey hairs. His affability, and equable flow of spirits endeared him to persons of all ages, and the young, no less than the old, prized him as a most agreeable companion.

He was a firm friend to his country. While the vital flame was quivering in its socket, he dictated a

letter to his only son, the Honourable James Lloyd, senator in congress, insisting on his remaining at his post, during the present session, as he considered duty to his country paramount to every other consideration. Thus, with a magnanimity truly admirable, he sacrificed his private feelings to the publick service.

He was a man of the warmest benevolence. He attended the poor with no less assiduity than the rich, and, in many instances, not only refused compensation for his professional services, but gave pecuniary aid to the relief of their urgent necessities. On the bed of death, he ordered that the names of those, who, he conceived, could ill afford to pay, should be erased from his books. He was the sympathising friend no less than the physician, and, to the poor and destitute, often condescended to perform the most menial offices.

He was a sincere christian. The physician may indeed say with Pope, and with more propriety,

E'en Sunday shines no sabbath day to me.

Obedient to every call of distress, he cannot, if his practice be extensive, always perform those external duties of religion, the neglect of which is inexcusable in others. Our blessed Saviour himself declares,

that the sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath ; and he, who performed works of mercy on that day, cannot be displeased with those, who imitate his example. Dr. Lloyd always spoke with profound reverence of Christianity, and attended public worship, when the duties of his profession would admit. He regretted, in his last illness, that he had not paid more attention to his religious duties, and observed, that his faith, at times, had been shaken by the disputes and dissensions of christians. I remarked to him, that all the followers of Christ agreed as to essentials, and that the best and wisest men, among all denominations, considered the points, which divided the christian world, by no means indispensably necessary to salvation ; that religious factions were distinguished by the adoption or rejection of particular doctrines ; that the subjects of dispute, to men of plain sense, were equally frivolous and uninteresting, though they might afford to metaphysical gladiators opportunities of exhibiting their prowess, which appeared, with some, a more favourite object, than the advancement of real religion. He agreed to the justness of these remarks, spoke of his imperfect services with regret, and, having received the sacrament, hoped for pardon from the mercy of God,

through the infinite merits of Jesus Christ. He bore with great patience a long sickness, and expressed his entire satisfaction with the kindness and affection of his physicians and family.

He was member of the philosophical society of Philadelphia, was chosen president of the Massachusetts medical society, senior consulting physician to the Boston dispensary, and belonged to many charitable and humane institutions.

I am indebted, for most of these particulars, to one,* who knew him well, who loved and revered him while living, and will never cease to cherish his memory with the fondest recollection.

Such, my brethren, was Dr. James Lloyd ; and if the value of a citizen is to be estimated by his public and private utility, this town has never, perhaps, sustained so great a loss. For nearly fifty-eight years he was in extensive practice, and there is probably no physician now living, to whom so many individuals have been under professional obligations.

The publick have lost in him a practitioner of the first-rate skill and respectability ; polished society a gentleman of consummate good-breeding ; his country a firm friend ; the poor a most benevolent benefactor ; his own family the fondest parent and grand-

* Dr. Isaac Rand, senior.

father ; and his domesticks the kindest master and patron. He has descended to the grave full of years and honour, an ornament to his profession, and an example to his survivors, with the esteem and veneration of all who knew him, and with the blessing of those ready to perish.

When we consider, that providence had prolonged his life beyond the common age of man, and that he exceeded fourscore years, we should rather feel grateful, that he was so long spared to us, than repine at his timely departure. Surely his relations have reason to say, O God, we thank thee that we enjoyed for so great a length of time the society of our beloved friend, that he arrived at a good old age, and died universally esteemed and respected.

With others, who have lost a mother and a friend,* we would willingly sympathize, had life, on the terms she held it, been desirable. But when disease is inveterate, and recovery hopeless, it is the duty of humanity to be thankful, that a fellow creature is released from a life of suffering. Indeed, we should always cherish that spirit of resignation, which religion enjoins ; we should always say, The Lord's will be

* Mrs. Sarah Deblois.

done. The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.

What then remains, my brethren, but that we prepare ourselves, with pious awe, and a well-grounded hope, for that everlasting state, to which we are hourly making a nearer approach. We all do fade as a leaf. The blast of death blows us from the tree of life. Experience confirms the melancholy truth. Many of you have lost a father or a mother, a son or a daughter, a brother or a sister, your best friends and dearest relations. The event is common, and you of course must follow them. You will go to them, but they will not return to you. In a few days, in a few months, or, at farthest, in a few years, your bodies, like theirs, will moulder in the grave, and dissolve into that dust, of which they were originally composed. For our time is short, our days are as a shadow. We all do fade as a leaf.

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